



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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9 May 1990

Prime Minister

Dear Charles,

I hope you will agree that we should pursue this idea - provided it has Gorbachev's support?

Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union:  
Soviet Military Representatives

Thank you for your letter of 1 May. You put forward the idea of a meeting between the Prime Minister and leading Soviet military representatives.

The Foreign Secretary thinks this is a good idea. You may have seen the shots on television the other night showing very stern-faced, bemedalled Generals listening in bleak silence as Gorbachev addressed them. The Foreign Secretary thinks that there would be value in the Prime Minister meeting some of the Generals to try to convince them that the process of perestroika, arms control and diminishing tension in Europe and elsewhere is in their professional interest and in the real interest of the Soviet armed forces and Soviet security as a whole. In the first years of Gorbachev, the Soviet military probably did think this. But they now evidently believe that Gorbachev and Shevardnadze have made a series of unrequited and humiliating concessions in the international field, which risk undermining the security of the Soviet Union and that domestically they have been exposed to a wave of public criticism and humiliation which Gorbachev has done nothing to moderate. It is in our interest to convince them otherwise if we can, and the Prime Minister is well placed to do it.

Yes  
no

The crucial question, as you suggest, is whether President Gorbachev would find such a meeting helpful. When Yazov visited Britain last year, Chernyaev told Sir Rodric Braithwaite that Gorbachev favoured the maximum exposure of the military to the outside world. That may not now be his view. The simplest thing would be to get Sir Rodric Braithwaite to ask Chernyaev. Would you now like us to do so?

Yours,  
Stephen Wall

(J S Wall)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

11 May 1990

**PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION:  
MEETING WITH SOVIET MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES**

Thank you for your letter of 9 May about the idea of a meeting between the Prime Minister and leading Soviet military representatives. The Prime Minister is content for us to approach Mr Gorbachev's office to see whether he would think such a meeting a good idea.

C. D. POWELL

Stephen Wall, Esq., L.V.O.  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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PERSONAL FOR HEMANS, SOVIET DEPARTMENT FROM LYNE

PRIME MINISTER'S PROGRAMME

1. DURING MY MEETING WITH KRASNOV ON 1 JUNE (WHICH I AM REPORTING SEPARATELY), HE SAID THAT THE PROVISIONAL LINE-UP FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE MILITARY AT 1630 ON 8 JUNE WOULD BE:

MARSHAL YAZOV

GENERAL MOISEV

GENERAL LUSHOV (WARSAW PACT COMMANDER)

GENERAL CHERVOV

USPENSKY

INTERPRETER

*- CDS equivalent*  
*- SACFOR equivalent*  
*- nuclear expert*

2. IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS, WE HAD TRIED TO STEER THE MFA IN THE DIRECTION OF A SLIGHTLY WIDER GROUP, EG BY MENTIONING THE AIR FORCE AND NAVAL COMMANDERS AS POSSIBILITIES AND BY TALKING IN TERMS OF HAVING PERHAPS 6-10 MILITARY LEADERS AROUND THE TABLE. WE HAVE ON ALL OCCASIONS, TODAY INCLUDED, STRESSED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER IS LOOKING FOR A FREE-RANGING ROUND TABLE SESSION, IN WHICH ALL PARTICIPANTS WOULD PARTICIPATE AND SPEAK FRANKLY. I JUDGE THAT WE HERE HAVE MORE OR LESS REACHED THE LIMITS OF OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE SOVIET LINE-UP. WE CANNOT ULTIMATELY DICTATE WHOM YAZOV SHOULD INVITE. IF NO 10 ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE WAY THE MEETING IS SHAPING UP, ONE OPTION MIGHT BE FOR CHARLES POWELL TO HAVE A QUIET WORD WITH KOSOV. ANOTHER WOULD BE TO LEAVE THIS UNTIL THE PRIME MINISTER SITS DOWN WITH GORBACHEV ON THE MORNING OF 8 JUNE, AND FOR HER TO MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS THEN.

3. WE HAVE YET TO DEFINE ATTENDANCE ON OUR SIDE, FOR WHICH USPENSKY'S PRESENCE HAS IMPLICATIONS.

BRITISH TRADE CENTRE

4. JUST AS HE WAS LEAVING FOR KIEV LAST NIGHT, THE AMBASSADOR RECEIVED A SOMEWHAT INSISTENT TELEX FROM CURTIS KEEBLE. CURTIS SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT THAT THERE MIGHT BE CHANGES TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S PROGRAMME. HE WAS PROCEEDING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE TRADE CENTRE PRESENTATION WOULD BEGIN AT 0900 IN THE WHITE

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HALL OF MOSSOVIET AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD JOINT IT AT 0915 FOR HALF AN HOUR. HE ASKED US TO INDICATE WHETHER THE CHANGES UNDER DISCUSSION WOULD AFFECT THE TRADE CENTRE PRESENTATION, 'THE EFFECT OF WHICH HINGES ENTIRELY ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRESENCE.'

5. I DO NOT WISH TO RISK CONFUSION BY ENGAGING IN A PARALLEL CORRESPONDENCE WITH CURTIS. AS YAZOV IS NOT TO BE BUDGED FROM HOLDING HIS MEETING IN THE AFTERNOON, I THINK THAT YOU CAN GENERALLY SET CURTIS'S MIND AT REST (THOUGH IT MIGHT BE PRUDENT TO AVOID AN IRREVOCABLE COMMITMENT, AT LEAST PENDING GORBACHEV'S RETURN FROM THE UNITED STATES). HOWEVER, CURTIS IS BIDDING FOR MORE TIME THAN WE AT PRESENT EXPECT THE PRIME MINISTER TO SPEND AT THE PRESENTATION. WITH THE ADDITION OF GPT TO THE PROGRAMME, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO SPEND MORE THAN A TOTAL OF 30 MINUTES AT MOSSOVIET. DON BROWN THINKS IT SHOULD SUFFICE FOR HER TO SPEND 15 MINUTES AT THE PRESENTATION (WHICH, HAVING BEEN HONOURED THUS, COULD CONTINUE AFTER HER DEPARTURE). THIS WOULD ALLOW HER THEN TO HAVE A 15-MINUTE CHAT WITH GAVRIIL POPOV, WHICH WE THINK WOULD BE WELL WORTH WHILE. I HAVE SPOKEN IN THESE TERMS TO KRASNOV. PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF WE SHOULD EXPAND OR RE-DIVIDE THE TIME SHE SPENDS AT MOSSOVIET. COULD YOU ALSO VERY KINDLY COMMUNICATE ON OUR BEHALF WITH CURTIS, IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS TELEX?

BRAITHWAITE

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

24 May 1990

*Dear Richard,*

**PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION**

I have now seen Moscow telegram no. 967 about the Prime Minister's programme in the Soviet Union.

It is still not clear whether the Embassy have pressed the Russians hard to allow us to have a meeting with the Soviet military on the Friday morning, before the start of the official programme. It seems to me this is the only occasion when we shall really have time for a proper talk, of which we need at least a clear hour. Having it at 1630 or so would be very much second-best and would mean sacrificing various media opportunities, which would be a pity. I should be grateful if Sir Rodric Braithwaite could use all his powers of persuasion with the Russians in favour of the earlier meeting. We can always drop the Anglo-Soviet trade centre briefing: the Prime Minister has already had it once. Mr. Thatcher could go in her stead.

I have already written with suggestions for Mr. Thatcher's programme which I hope will not have been received in Moscow.

Similarly I have given some pointers for Mr. Baker. I understand he would like to visit the exhibition in the afternoon, once the Prime Minister has moved on to other things, and have suggested that a member of the Embassy could be detailed to accompany him. He will want to attend the Opera in the evening. I understand that Sir Jeffrey Sterling will no longer accompany him.

*Yours sincerely,  
C. D. Powell*

(C. D. POWELL)

Richard Gozney, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

16 May 1990

**PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW:  
MEETING WITH THE SOVIET MILITARY**

I have now seen Moscow telegram number 874 about the idea of a meeting between the Prime Minister and the Soviet military leaders.

The Prime Minister attaches importance to such a meeting and will want ample time found for it. In practice, this is likely to mean at least an hour. The best time, as the programme is organised at present, would be early on the morning of the Friday (possibly over breakfast) before the Prime Minister meets Mr. Gorbachev at the Kremlin. This would mean the Russians accepting that, in protocol terms, the meeting would be outside the official programme. Otherwise we would have to go for the late afternoon of the Friday: but this would be more cramped.

As to participation, I am no expert on the Soviet military. But I would hope that most of the following might be present: Yazov, Akromeyev, Moiseyev, Lunkov and Gromov, or senior officers of equivalent interest and importance. I would have thought half a dozen about the right number. The Prime Minister envisages a round table discussion. She would want to see them alone with just a note-taker and interpreter. She would be perfectly happy to go to them rather than have them come to the Embassy if that were more convenient.

You will wish to draw on this in sending instructions to Sir Roderic Braithwaite for tomorrow.

C. D. POWELL

Richard Gozney, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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*R/ce immediate Mr Powell*

*No 10*

*We spoke*

*X back please*

*R/16*

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PERSONAL FOR HEAD OF SOVIET DEPARTMENT

YOUR TELNO 824: POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND SOVIET MILITARY LEADERS

1. I SOUNDED CHERNYAYEV IN MY BILATERAL MEETING WITH HIM ON 14 MAY FOLLOWING THE JOINT DEMARCHE WITH THE US AMBASSADOR.

2. CHERNYAYEV TELEPHONED ON THE MORNING OF 15 MAY TO SAY THAT HE HAD CONSULTED BOTH GORBACHEV AND YAZOV. GORBACHEV "HAD NO OBJECTION" TO THE IDEA. NOR DID YAZOV. LYNE ASKED WHETHER THIS MEANT THAT GORBACHEV WAS FIRMLY IN FAVOUR, AS I HAD TOLD CHERNYAYEV THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD ONLY WISH TO MEET MILITARY LEADERS IF GORBACHEV CONSIDERED THIS USEFUL. CHERNYAYEV ASSENTED: THE MEETING HAD GORBACHEV'S SUPPORT, AND YAZOV'S APPROVAL. WE SHOULD NOW FIX THE DETAILS THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

3. AS SOON AS WE HAVE YOUR CONFIRMED INSTRUCTIONS, AND AN INDICATION OF HOW YOU WOULD LIKE THIS TO FIT INTO THE PROGRAMME IN FCO TELNO 846, WE SHALL APPROACH THE MFA AND THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE. COULD YOU GIVE US FURTHER GUIDANCE ON THE LENGTH AND FORMAT OF THE MEETING, AND THE SORT OF MILITARY LEADERS WHOM THE PRIME MINISTER HOPES TO MEET?

4. GRATEFUL IF WE COULD RECEIVE YOUR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS BY 171300Z SO THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE CAN BE BRIEFED BEFORE HIS FINAL MEETING WITH MARSHAL YAZOV. MR KING WILL OBVIOUSLY WISH TO DISCUSS THE MEETING IN GENERAL TERMS WITH HIS SOVIET COUNTERPART.

BRAITHWAITE

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